

TITLE OF THE INVENTION**BAG APPARATUS****BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****1. Field of the Invention**

5 [0001] The present invention relates in general to a bag apparatus, and more particularly a bag apparatus which includes a receiver assembly for suspending the bag apparatus from an outside object, such as, for example, a hook, wherein the flowable material contained within the bag apparatus can be dispensed.

2. Background Art

10 [0002] Bag apparatuses that are suspended during storage and/or dispensing are well known in the art. Such containers comprise a pillow-type container having a front panel and a back panel attached together to form a cavity. A fitment is provided for communication with the cavity. Often, appendages of the front and/or back panel are formed from which the container can be suspended.

15 [0003] While such containers have had certain success, there are drawbacks associated with these containers. For example, the appendages are generally formed from the same material as the containers. Such a material often does not provide the tear strength necessary for suspension. Certain solutions have increased the rigidity of the appendage material by forming heat seals proximate the suspension area. Such solutions have met only with limited success.

20 [0004] Another drawback of present containers is that such containers are often difficult to manipulate, and, it is often difficult to dispense as desired from the container as the flowable

material is dispensed.

[0005] Accordingly, it is an object of the invention to provide an improved bag apparatus for suspension from an outside object.

5 [0006] It is another object of the invention to provide a bag apparatus with enhanced dispensing properties, which bag apparatus may be of different sizes and which bag apparatus is configured for suspension from an outside object.

[0007] These objects as well as other objects of the present invention will become apparent in light of the present specification, claims, and drawings.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The invention comprises a bag apparatus capable of being releasably attached to an outside object. The bag comprises a container, a fitment and a suspending assembly. The container includes a front surface and a back surface, the front and back surface are sealed to each other to define a substantially fluid-tight cavity. The fitment is associated with front surface of the container. The fitment is in fluid communication with the fluid-tight cavity. The suspending assembly is configured for suspension from an outside object. The suspending assembly comprises at least one hang tab. The hang tab includes a front surface and a back surface, each having a first portion and a second portion, wherein one of the first portion and the second portion of the back surface are adhered to one of the front and back panels of the container. The receiver assembly is associated with the other of the first portion and the second portion, the receiver assembly facilitates the attachment to an outside object.

[0009] In a preferred embodiment, the container includes a top seal. Additionally, the at least one hang tab includes an adhesive edge. The adhesive edge is spaced apart from the top seal of the container a predetermined distance. In one such embodiment, the at least one hang tab is positioned such that the entirety thereof overlies a portion of the one of the front panel and the back panel to which it is attached.

[0010] In another embodiment, the at least one hang tab comprises a pair of hang tabs, wherein the pair of hang tabs are spaced apart from each other. In one such embodiment, each of the hang tabs is substantially identical.

[0011] In one embodiment, the receiver assembly comprises a slot extending through the

hang tab.

[0012] In another embodiment, at least a portion of the bottom portion of the back surface is attached to the back panel.

5 [0013] In another embodiment, the fitment is positioned so as to extend through the front panel.

[0014] In yet another embodiment, the at least one hang tab includes an adhesive edge, and the container includes a top seal and a bottom seal. The adhesive edge is spaced apart a distance from the top seal of the container a distance substantially identical to the distance the fitment is spaced apart from the bottom seal.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- [0015] The invention will now be described with reference to the drawings wherein:
- [0016] Figure 1 of the drawings is a front plan view of the dispensing apparatus of the present invention;
- 5 [0017] Figure 2 of the drawings is a back plan view of the dispensing apparatus of the present invention; and
- [0018] Figure 3 of the drawings is a cross-sectional view of a filled container of the present invention, showing in particular rotation imparted thereon upon suspending from an outside object.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0019] While this invention is susceptible of embodiment in many different forms, there is shown in the drawings and described herein in detail a specific embodiment with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the invention to the embodiment illustrated.

[0020] It will be understood that like or analogous elements and/or components, referred to herein, may be identified throughout the drawings by like reference characters. In addition, it will be understood that the drawings are merely schematic representations of the invention, and some of the components may have been distorted from actual scale for purposes of pictorial clarity.

[0021] Referring now to the drawings and in particular to Figures 1 and 2, collectively, bag apparatus 10 is shown as comprising container 12, fitment 14 and suspending assembly 16. Bag apparatus 10 is configured and suitable for hanging from, for example, hooks 100 (Figure 3), or other hanging surfaces. Of course, such hanging may be permanent or temporary, and the invention is not limited to any particular hanging surface.

[0022] Container 12 is shown in Figures 1 and 2, collectively, as including front panel 20 and back panel 22. Such a container is often termed a pillow container. In the embodiment shown, the front and back panels are substantially identical in dimension and are substantially co-extensive. The front and back panel generally comprise rectangular components have a width

of between 6 and 30 inches, and a length of between 6 and 30 inches. Of course, the invention is not limited to any particularly sized and shaped container, and any number of different shapes having different dimensions are contemplated for use. Of course, any number of different pillow container constructions are contemplated, including but not limited to fin-sealed, four seam and three seam, among others. Of course, other types of containers are contemplated for use, wherein such containers include a front panel and a back panel.

5 [0023] The front and back panels are secured together by way of top seal 24, bottom seal 26, first side edge 28 and second side edge 30. The seals are continuous and form a substantially fluid-impervious cavity 33. In the embodiment shown, the seals are positioned proximate each of the edges of the front and back panel. Of course, a greater or a fewer number of seals may be utilized to define cavity 33, and the seals may be spaced apart from the edges of the front and back panel. The seals may be formed by any number of different sealing techniques, including, but not limited to heat sealing, RF sealing, adhesive sealing, among others.

10 [0024] Fitment 14 is shown in Figures 1 and 2, collectively, as providing fluid communication with cavity 33. The fitment, in the embodiment shown, is positioned proximate bottom seal 26 in a spaced apart relationship therewith. Fitment 14 is positioned so as to extend through opening 35 in the front panel of the container, and heat sealed thereto, so as to be in substantially fluid tight engagement therewith.

15 [0025] Suspending assembly 16 is shown in Figure 1 as comprising a plurality of hang tabs 40, 40'. It will be understood that hang tab 40 and hang tab 40' are substantially identical. As such, hang tab 40 will be discussed in detail with the understanding that hang tab 40' is

substantially identical. It will be understood that the particular number of hang tabs, as well as the shape of each of the hang tabs can be varied. For example, a greater or fewer number of hang tabs may be employed. Similarly, each of the hang tabs may be of any desired shape, size and configuration.

5 [0026] Hang tab 40 is shown as comprising front surface 42, back surface 44, top portion 50, bottom portion 52, adhesive edge 46 and receiver assembly 48. The hang tab is shown as including a polymer member having a substantially uniform thickness. One such material comprises a woven material laminated between polyethylene. One such material is available from Can-Do National Tape of Nashville, Tennessee. Generally, hang tab 40 may comprise a material having a tear strength which is greater than container 12 (although other embodiments are likewise contemplated). In the embodiment shown, bottom portion 52 is attached to container 12 by way of an adhesive. The attachment between the hang tab and the container extends to adhesive edge 46, so that at least a part of back surface 44 is free from adhesion to container 12. The hang tab 40 is positioned such that the adhesive edge 46 is spaced apart from the top seal of the container a predetermined distance. Moreover, the hang tab may be sized and positioned such that the entirety of the hang tab overlies the back surface of the container. Of course, other embodiments are contemplated wherein the hang tab extends beyond the top seal of the container. Additionally, in certain embodiments, any one of the top portion and the bottom portion of either the front surface or the back surface may be attached to either the front panel or the back panel of the container.

10

15

20

[0027] Receiver assembly 48 is shown as comprising slot 55 extending through top

portion 50 of the hang tab. The receiver assembly facilitates attachment of the bag apparatus to an outside object, such as the above-described hooks. Of course, other receiver assemblies, including hook-loop fasteners, snaps, molded structures, etc. are contemplated for use, among others.

5 [0028] In operation, a user can fill the container through the fitment (or prior to applying each of the seals) with a flowable material. Subsequently, the user can releasably attach the container to an outside object. For example, to attach the bag apparatus to a hook, the hook can be extended through one of the receiver assemblies, or through multiple receiver assemblies.

10 [0029] Once attached, the bag apparatus can freely hang from such a hook. Advantageously, as the tear strength of the hang tab is preferably higher than the tear strength of the container material, the hook is less likely to tear the tab as compared to a container suspended by appendages formed from the various panels of the container. As is shown in Figure 3, in the filled configuration, inasmuch as the adhesive edge 46 is spaced apart from top seal 24 a predetermined distance, the container rotates such that the adhesive edge becomes the effective top of the container. Such rotation likewise rotates the bottom portion of the container, thereby positioning the fitment near the effective bottom of the container in the hanging position. Such an arrangement greatly increases the efficacy of dispensing of the flowable material – especially as dispensing proceeds and the levels of flowable material decrease.

15

20 [0030] The foregoing description merely explains and illustrates the invention and the invention is not limited thereto except insofar as the appended claims are so limited, as those skilled in the art who have the disclosure before them will be able to make modifications without

departing from the scope of the invention.